

## **U.S. Senator Mark Kirk Visits The Kingdom of Bahrain, Bahrain's Ambassador to the U.S. Hails Strong Bilateral Ties**

WASHINGTON (April 28, 2011)- Deputy Premier Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa met with U.S. Senator Mark Kirk (R- Ill.) at the Gudaibiya Palace in Manama on April 27. Meeting in the presence of Deputy Premier Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, the two groups discussed and reaffirmed the strong bilateral ties shared between the United States and The Kingdom of Bahrain. They also discussed areas of mutual concern and new ways to bolster the relationship in the future.

The Kingdom's Ambassador to the U.S. Ms. Houda Nonoo said, "We are thrilled to have Senator Kirk visit The Kingdom of Bahrain. The U.S. and Bahrain have a strong, historic relationship. Our American friends are always welcome in Bahrain and Senator Kirk's visit serves as a reminder that our two countries share an unshakable bond."

Noting optimism for the future partnership between Bahrain and the United States Ambassador Nonoo said, "We have long been home to the United States Navy's Fifth Fleet and we look forward to forging new paths to work together in the future."

Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission to Bahrain Stephanic Williams and individuals in Senator Kirk's delegation also were present during the meeting.

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## Bahraini Prime Minister Meets with Local Church Leaders, Says Country is a Model of Toleration

MANAMA, April 27 -- Bahraini Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa met with community church leaders yesterday to discuss religious tolerance and national unity efforts in the country.

The prime minister reaffirmed that the country will always be a "vivid model of toleration and co-existence." He noted that, "The cultural and social ingredients in Bahrain are based on melting all sects in the same cauldron, freedom of religion and acceptance of the other."

The Prime Minister thanked the religious leaders for their commitment to the country during the crisis and for their help in protecting Bahrain's national achievements.

"Bahrain has been able, thanks to the contribution of all factions, to lay down the basis of a modern country characterized by harmony, cohesion and love among all," he said.

The constitution lays the groundwork for this cohesion by supporting religious freedom and tolerance and safeguarding the rights of all factions, the Prime Minister said. He then urged continued unity to ensure the stability and future progress of the country.

"All Bahrainis, regardless of their different faiths and doctrines, have to work for the benefit of the kingdom and its prosperity, security and stability as no one is immune when threats loom," he noted. "We are all partners sharing the same homeland and bound by a common destiny and goal which is to ensure a thriving nation benefiting all."

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